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# Castles

G. A. Scotland

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# CASTLECARY

AND

## THE GREAT ROMAN WALL:

THEIR HISTORY, REMAINS, AND TRADITIONS:  
A NEW CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

BY THE  
REV. HUGH BAIRD,  
CUMBERNAULD.

‘Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.’—MOSES.

FALKIRK:  
CHARLES JEFFREY.

1864.



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## PREFACE.

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THE only reason the Author has to assign for investigating the Roman History and Traditions of Castlécary and the Great Wall of Antoninus, is his long residence in the immediate neighbourhood. All the circumstances from history, Roman remains, tradition, and the names of places in the neighbourhood, have been familiar to his own mind for some time ; and he has done what he could to throw light on a once important locality, and on a subject still very interesting. He trusts that others will be stirred up to make farther investigations, and he has no doubt that they will meet with an abundant reward. The subject of Roman remains is far from being



exhausted, and is well worthy of the attention of antiquarians and others. The great interest excited in the locality by reading his investigations to large audiences, and the desire of many to have a small work on the subject, encourage the Author to venture this publication.

CUMBERNAULD, *September* 1864

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# CASTLE CARY.

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## INTRODUCTION.

**SOME** idea of the ancient history of every country may be derived from its battle-fields. Even in the absence of written records, the battle-fields of Scotland, viewed in the light of tradition, form an interesting and profitable study. They are great landmarks, not easily removed, and testify where our brave ancestors mustered and fought for kindred and country. They are heaps of witnesses, standing memorials, which arrest the eye of the traveller, and thrill the hearts of all true patriots. For example, five hundred and fifty years have passed away since the great battle of Bannockburn was fought and won, and the independence of Scotland firmly established; yet the posts held by the opposing armies, the bloody death-field, and all the great scenes and incidents, are fresh

in the minds of those who dwell in the locality, and fresh in the minds of all true Scotsmen. And we have no doubt, that when many more centuries have passed away, Bannockburn will still be a green spot and a memorable watchword, not only in the history, but in the mind of Scotland. Yes, the battle-fields of Scotland can never be forgotten. In many solitary districts, the dust of our remote ancestors lies sleeping, and the graves of the martyrs flower the land. They fought, they struggled, and they fell, fighting for freedom and religion, for home and for friends. Whenever we, their patriot sons, stand on such hallowed spots, let the fire of true patriotism burn within us, and let us linger and revisit them with deep reverence and unfading interest.

#### CASTLECARY FORT.

There is no place in Scotland possessing deeper interest than Castlecary. It is the first known battle-field of Scotland. It is the centre of interest in ancient Caledonia. It is the keystone of the old Roman conquests. *There* our remote ancestors fought many a battle with the Roman

legions. *There* the Caledonians often mustered and struggled hard for freedom, and the struggle was long and doubtful. *There* the Roman soldiers built their forts and walls, dug their trenches, and kept their ground for three hundred and fifty years. The word 'Castlecary' is doubtless as old as the Roman invasion of Scotland. It was first given to the fortified camp or castle, formed on the knoll or rising ground at the east end of the bridge erected by the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Company, and now called Castlecary Bridge. That once famous place was the central *castellum*, or castle of the Romans in Scotland, to which the Roman legions and their enslaved captives *carried* stones to build a fort, in order to strengthen their position, and aid in repelling the attacks of the brave Caledonians: hence, some say, comes the word 'Castlecary.'

## CORIA.

But we are of a different opinion. When the Romans came to Castlecary, the name of the place was *Coria*, a Celtic word which means a *fort*, and which indicates that the place was a native hill-fort

of the Caledonians before and at the time of the Roman invasion. Since then, the word 'Coria' has been corrupted into *cary*; but it is a word still found in many Scottish names, such as Caeridden, *the fort at the landing*, and Sanquhar, *the old fort*. When the Romans found such a word as Coria, they often prefixed a Latin word of the same meaning; and hence originated the word 'Castlecary,' which means, in Latin and Celtic, *fort, fort*, or, if you will, *the Fort of forts*, or the Great Fort. Castlecary Fort is in the parish of Falkirk, at the western extremity of the parish, but scarcely two miles distant from Cumbernauld, while it is about seven miles distant from Falkirk.

#### CASTLECARY VISITED.

On the old camp ground of Castlecary, the visitor is nearly equi-distant from the Friths of Forth and Clyde; or, as the Romans called them, Clot and Bodotria. It is, from the south, the *finis* or termination of the Roman possessions in Caledonia; the old landmark, the great boundary line, distinctly marked, carefully watched, and strongly guarded. This old fort ground

is truly classic ground, where the Latin language was spoken and written by learned and civilised Romans. Castlecary may be regarded as the birthplace of letters in Scotland, and ought to be dear to all antiquarians ; and it may be regarded as the birthplace of liberty and civilisation, enough to enshrine it in the bosoms of all Scotsmen. For hundreds of years fathers have conveyed knowledge, and impressions, and traditions of it to their sons ; so that from age to age we have, concerning it, a regular transmission of interesting circumstances and great events, corroborated by facts and visible landmarks.

#### OLD OBJECTS.

Standing on this classic ground, the visitor looks around. *There* is a clump of trees, planted by a friendly hand, covering the old burying-place of the Roman dead, where broken urns, enclosing their ashes, have often been seen and found. *There* is the Redburn, whose waters gurgle sweetly through the glen. On the steep banks were many hard-fought fights, and more than once its pure waters were dyed red with Roman blood. *There* lies the burnt



wheat, the form of the grains still visible, which the Romans offered as a burnt-offering to their idol gods; or which the Romans destroyed, that it might not fall into the hands of their enemies; or which the Caledonians or Picts set fire to when they took and burned the fort. Lovers of the antique and curious have often carried away small portions of this wheat, and some of it may still be found. *There* are numerous dressed free-stones lying around, and built in boundary walls of fields and roads, which the Roman tools cut and squared, and the marks of which are still distinctly seen. *There*, in a field below the slope of the great wall, are masses of broken chips, from stones which the Romans quarried and dressed, to build their altars, and vaults, and forts. These chips tell us where the great Roman quarry was, and where, a little beneath the surface, it may still be found. *There*, around the visitor, is a large space of eight or ten acres, with a deep slope on two sides, partly circular and partly triangular. This space, considerably raised, is the fort or camp ground of the Romans, once instinct with soldier life, once covered with Roman buildings and tents, white

with the winter snow, or glittering in the summer sun, of ancient Caledonia. Much of this fort ground is vaulted underneath, and some of the vaults are known to be at least eight feet deep. If search were allowed and made, we believe several acres of vaults would be discovered, once the concealed storehouses, dwellings, and prisons of the Romans.

#### NEW OBJECTS.

*There*, at the foot of the slope from the Roman fort, the visitor now discerns the glassy surface of the Forth and Clyde Canal, crossing the country like a great inland river, while now and then sloops and barges dragged by horses, and passenger and other boats impelled by steam, move slowly along the surface. *There*, close at hand, is the station of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway, where the warning bell announces a stopping train, whose living crowds are rapidly carried over the very centre of the old Roman fort. *There* too, near by, is the Castlecary branch of the Caledonian Railway, the great highway of Scotland from south to north and from north to south. *There*, in the background, is

Castlecary Wood, very dense and dark, and very much like the old forests of Caledonia, when the land was nearly all forest and morass. This wood must have been a more formidable barrier than mud walls and deep ditches. And *there* in the distance, over the sweet vale, are the Kilsyth and Campsie hills, and the high lands above Dennyloanhead, where the Caledonians roamed at large, and found a safe retreat, and where the Roman legions durst not penetrate.

#### GREAT CHANGES.

Standing thus on the classic ground of Castlecary fort, the visitor muses and soliloquizes : the crowded fort of armed men ready for war has given place to railway carriages crowded with passengers and peaceful travellers ; the buzz of warrior voices and the clangour of polished arms have changed into the puffing of engines and the rattle of iron wheels ; the neighing of war-horses, richly caparisoned, and eager to rush into the battle, has given place to the snorting of the iron horse, with his long line of cars, moving rapidly without effort and without fatigue ; the

sound of the war-trumpet has died away, and the piercing scream of the railway whistle has come in its stead; the old battle-ground and the blood-dyed herbage are now the scenes of business enterprise and modern improvement; the once busy, bustling, crowded fort, covered with thousands of armed men, is now a green field, where lowing cattle find a scanty living. What a great change! How profitable and interesting to contrast the ancient past of busy scenes, with the dreary present of entailed desolation! Oh that we had eagles' eyes and eagles' wings, to gaze and luxuriate on the delightful scene! Scottish patriot and lover of the antique, how can you help exclaiming—

‘ O Caledonia, stern and wild!  
Meet nurse for a poetic child!  
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood!  
Land of the mountain and the flood!  
Land of my sires! what mortal hand  
Can e’er untie the filial band  
That binds me to thy rugged strand?’

#### ROMAN REMAINS.

At and near Castlecary have been found many Roman remains, such as parts of urns, vases, and broken dishes in great

abundance, made of red clay, and as fine as china: also, parts of brazen helmets and shields; milestones, with Roman numerals; stones with emblems of deer, stones of broken altars, engraved with the *Thuribulum*, or censer for incense; other stones with various strange emblems and inscriptions, recording that the second legion and detachments from the sixth and twentieth legions were employed in making forts, and in constructing the great Roman wall. Some of these stones the writer has seen and examined. Some of them were found when, about a century ago, the Forth and Clyde Canal was dug, and may be seen in the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow. The writer has also seen a ring key of bronze, a padlock of iron with key, a silver denarius of Cæsar Augustus, and another silver denarius of Hadrian, all found near Castlecary. About a mile west from Castlecary is the old Roman well, a spring of excellent water. It is quite close to Graham's Dyke. Here many a Roman, doubtless, quenched his thirst; and after seventeen centuries have passed away, it is as serviceable to travellers as ever. Near to this well is the farm of Westerwood, where the Roman *fossa* is very distinct, and where

was a Roman square fort. The vestiges are very distinct; and the causeway, which goes round the fort on the top of the ramparts, may still be traced. Farther west, on the farm of Carrickstone, and a short distance from the Roman wall, is *the Standing Stane*. This is, without doubt, a Roman stone, and intended to commemorate some great event, or mark the burying-place of some Roman soldier of note. The stone is a solid block, polished, and about four feet in height, and is inserted in a larger stone, to give it a broad and sure foundation; but it has no inscription. This stone has a hole in its top, said to have been made by order of Robert Bruce, who inserted his standard in it while his forces rested, and when he was leading them towards Bannockburn.

These Roman remains speak with a silent yet significant voice. They tell us that, seventeen centuries ago, the lands now cultivated around us were held by strangers,—strangers who came to conquer and plunder, burn and destroy, yet strangers who brought to our fatherland literature and learning, and a written language; strangers who taught the art of war by disciplined troops, and strangers who in-

troduced many a custom that transformed our dear native land from comparative barbarism to progress and civilisation.

#### ROMAN INVASION OF BRITAIN.

In the year 55 before Christ, Julius Cæsar crossed the British Channel from Gaul, now France, and invaded England with his Roman legions. He had found the conquest of Gaul so easy, that he exultingly exclaimed, *Veni, vidi, vici!* I came, I saw, I conquered. But he had harder and longer work in England, as England was not so easily overcome. The victories obtained were obtained with difficulty, and somehow or other the British tribes did not know when they were conquered. Though overcome once, they soon returned to fight again; and it required a large expenditure of life and labour, of money and means, to secure a permanent possession. Accordingly, the Romans were in England one hundred and thirty-five years before they were in a position to invade Scotland. Having at length overcome their enemies in the south, they, like hungry vultures, turned their faces to the north.

## AGRICOLA. A.D. 81.

Julius Agricola, the boldest and most successful of all the Roman generals in Britain, invaded Scotland in the summer of A.D. 81. That was the year when Titus Vespasian, the conqueror and destroyer of Jerusalem, died. He was succeeded as Emperor of Rome by Flavius Domitian, the cruel tyrant who banished the Apostle John to the lonely isle of Patmos. This emperor, though jealous of Agricola and his conquests, confirmed his appointment as governor of Britain. Thus appointed, the bold Agricola, with his Roman legions and auxiliaries, marched northward, and had literally to cut his way into Scotland, through forests, and marshes, and hostile inhabitants; but, by determined energy and perseverance, he overcame all difficulties, and reached, before the end of the season, Castlecary and the Frith of Forth.

Yonder is a small town or village, the dwelling-place of peaceful yet brave and happy inhabitants. The men and women are busy at their humble occupations, cutting wood for fire, and grinding corn



for food. The children are within sight, sporting, and apparently secure, and cheering their parents with merry laughter. The sheep, and cattle, and horses, are feeding quietly at a short distance from their owners, and patches of corn are growing on cultivated spots for winter supplies. But these peaceful and gladdening scenes soon disappear. Suddenly emerging out of the forest, large numbers of armed men appear, and the sound of strange voices falls upon the ear. Their bodies are covered with glittering brass, and a helmet of brass covers and elevates the head. One hand holds a large target for defence, and the other wields the glittering sword for attack. Terror at once seizes the inhabitants, and many fly for their lives, and seek concealment. Others, braver than the rest, grasp their bows and arrows, determined to attack the foreign foes and repel the intruders. The accurate marksman watches his opportunity; but, alas, his arrow rattles to no purpose against the strong plate armour of the assailants. The town, or village, at the edge of the forest is an easy prey to the invaders, and is entirely at their mercy. It is immediately entered and plundered.

Instruments of cruelty are in the hands of the invaders. Fire and sword do their deadly work. The cattle are driven away, the crops are destroyed, the homes are plundered, and the people flee to the mountains, or hide themselves in their dark woods.

Such is a specimen of the deadly progress of the Roman warriors through our dear fatherland. They were well armed and fully equipped, while their opponents were poorly armed, and all but naked. They marched in unison and in mass, being trained and disciplined troops ; while the Caledonians had bravery to fight for their homes, but no unity, and no discipline. Wherever the Romans went, the sword was law, might was right ; and blood and burning, slavery and starvation, destruction and death, immediately followed.

#### THE DUNSWOOD.

When Agricola approached Castlecary, he found it a native fort or *dun*, defended by brave and warlike Caledonians, armed with bows, and shields, and swords. Before he could reach the fort he must pass through *Dunswood*, a word which means

*the fort by the wood*, and a word by which the wood in the glen, quite near the fort, is still known. The word *dun* is Celtic, and means a hill or fort, and seems to have been in common use when the Romans were in Scotland. Hence Dunipace, the forts of peace; Dunbarton, the fort defending the town; Dunkeld, the fort of the Caledonians; Dunedin, the fort of Edwin, the old name of Edinburgh; and many other words. Well, Agricola, placing his heavy mailed soldiers in front and in close phalanx, they crossed from the south the Dunswood Burn at Castlecary, and slowly and surely began their ascent. These Roman soldiers were covered by their long shields, formed when in mass like the back of a tortoise, with scale over scale. Thus covered, the Caledonian bowmen, from their hill-fort, discharge against them a shower of arrows. But these arrows are as harmless as hailstones on the brazen helmets and breastplates of the assailants, who move onward and upward with stubborn perseverance. Like oxen in the yoke, ploughing up a hill, their progress in ascending the sloping banks is slow, but sure and determined. The defenders from above, as a last re-

source, hurl stones upon their foes ; but these are partially eluded, and do little injury, while the resolute invaders, well supported and bravely led, surmount all difficulties. The skilled, well-armed veterans cross the ditches, scale the walls, enter the fort with a loud cheer, and put the brave defenders to the sword or a hasty flight.

#### THE CENTRAL FORT.

In this way Agricola and his Roman legions obtained possession of native forts such as Castlecary ; and Castlecary is no sooner in his hands, than he saw how the land lay. Soon he discovered the importance of such an acquisition, and began to strengthen and fortify it. Having now obtained a strong resting-place for his troops, he set some to work, some to explore, and others to watch the enemy. Soon he discovered that there was only a narrow neck of land between the Friths of Forth and Clyde, extending to about thirty-six miles. In order to preserve his conquests, keep back the Caledonians among their woods and hills, and live upon their industry, he began to erect a chain of forts

across the isthmus. But the great central fort was Castlecary. It was the citadel of the whole country. It was the headquarters of the Roman general and his army, while there were smaller forts, east and west, every two miles. Several years must have been occupied in the construction of these forts, and many pressed men forced to aid in the great work. At Castlecary, extensive vaults were built of wrought masonry, covering several acres of ground, and doubtless intended for safe storehouses, safe prisons, and concealment from enemies. Parts of these vaults have been seen, but the greater part yet remain to be explored. The chain of forts erected by Agricola was the germ or beginning of what afterwards became the Great Roman Wall.

#### MORE CONQUESTS.

As soon as Agricola thought that his mountain was strong, and that he had got a permanent hold of the country as far north as Castlecary, he formed other plans, and began to prepare for more conquests. He had a large fleet of galleys or little ships sent from the river Tyne to the river Forth, by means of which he readily con-

veyed the best and bravest of his troops into the kingdom of Fife. There he fought several battles, and was always victorious. There he plundered the inhabitants, destroyed their homes, and took possession of their cattle ; while his fleet hovered near the coast, and supplied his army with provisions, when supplies by plunder failed. This campaign in Fife was in A.D. 83, nearly two years after Castlecary became a Roman fort. It was quite successful, as all enemies kept at a respectful distance after the first encounters. As, however, Agricola's intended explorations and conquests were not completed in one campaign, he resolved to winter in Fife, acquire further knowledge of the country, and finish, if possible, what he had begun, during the course of another summer.

#### THE REDBURN.

While Agricola was absent in Fife, strong bands of the ever-watchful Caledonians descended from the hills, and aided by native tribes from the west, made vigorous and repeated attacks on Castlecary and other forts in the neighbourhood. At Castlecary the encounter was desperate

and bloody ; the Romans were driven out of their stronghold, and the fortifications laid in ruins. History and tradition inform us that a whole legion of Roman soldiers were cut to pieces at different places, while the slaughter at Castlecary was so dreadful, that the blood of the slain ran into the burn, and many dead bodies being thrown in as well, the water became red as blood ; and in order to commemorate this event, the people of the woods called it 'Redburn,' and it bears the name of Redburn to this day.

TACITUS. A.D. 84.

In the summer of A.D. 84, the Caledonians north of the Forth mustered all their clans. They had heard of the victorious progress of Agricola in Fife during the previous summer. They had often mustered and fought against each other, but now a common enemy forces a temporary union. They assemble together, and after mature deliberation they resolved to fight or die for freedom and country. They chose Galgacus for their leader and commander, and under him they determined to risk a pitched battle with their power-

ful foes. The common fear of danger made them, like Pilate and Herod, warm friends in order to resist a common enemy. Tacitus, the Roman historian, who was married to the daughter of Agricola, and who wrote the life of his distinguished father-in-law, gives us a detailed account of this great battle. However, like other one-sided historians, Tacitus makes everything as favourable to the Romans as possible, while he carefully passes over in silence many little Roman defects. His account magnifies the Roman difficulties, that he may magnify the Roman victories. Most historians are agreed that the great pitched battle between the Romans and the collected forces of the Caledonians, was fought on Ardoch Moor, at the foot of the Grampians. On this battle-ground many broken weapons of war have been discovered, and other traces of a great battle having been fought here are still apparent. Tacitus records the speech which Galgacus, the Caledonian general, is believed to have addressed to his troops immediately before the battle. This speech, though from the pen of an enemy, is so interesting, and gives such a view of the contending parties, that we give it entire. It is one of the earliest



and most satisfactory documents found in the history of our country.

SPEECH OF GALGACUS.

When I reflect on the causes of the war, and the circumstances of our situation, I feel a strong persuasion that our united efforts this day will prove the beginning of universal liberty to Britain. For we are all undebased by slavery, and there is no land behind us, nor does even the sea afford a refuge, whilst the Roman fleet hovers around. Thus, the use of arms, which is at all times honourable to the brave, now offers the only safety even to cowards. In all the battles which have yet been fought with various success against the Romans, our countrymen may be deemed to have reposed their final hopes and resources in us; for we, the noblest sons of Britain, and therefore stationed in its last recesses, far from the view of servile shores, have preserved even our eyes unpolluted by the contact of subjection. We, at the farthest limits both of land and liberty, have been defended to this day by the remoteness of our situation and our fame. The extremity of Britain is now disclosed, and

whatever is unknown becomes an object of magnitude. But there is no nation beyond us, nothing but waves and rocks, and nothing before us but the still more hostile Romans, whose arrogance we cannot escape by obsequiousness and submission.

These plunderers of the world, after exhausting the land by their devastations, are rifling the ocean, stimulated by avarice if their enemy be rich, by ambition if poor, unsatiated by the east and by the west,—the only people who behold wealth and indigence with equal avidity. To ravage, to slaughter, to usurp under false titles, they call these Empire; and where they make a desert, they call it peace. Our children and relations are, by the appointment of nature, rendered the dearest of all things to us. These are torn away by levies to serve in foreign lands. Our wives and sisters, though they should escape the violation of hostile force, are polluted under the names of friendship and hospitality. Our estates and possessions are consumed in tribute, and our grain in contributions; even our bodies are worn down amidst stripes and insults, in clearing woods and draining marshes. Wretches born to

slavery are once bought and afterwards maintained by their masters ; but Britain every day buys, every day feeds, her own servitude. And as, among domestic slaves, every new comer serves for the derision of his fellows, so in this ancient household of the world, we, as the newest and vilest, are sought out to destruction. For we have neither cultivated lands, nor mines, nor harbours, which can induce them to preserve us for our labours.

Since, then, all hopes of mercy are vain, let those at length assume courage to whom safety as well as to whom glory is dear. The Trinobantes (a nation in England), even under a female leader, had force enough to burn a colony, to storm camps, and, if success had not damped their vigour, would have been able entirely to throw off the yoke. And shall not we, untouched, unsubdued, and struggling not for the acquisition but for the security of liberty, show, at the very first onset, what men Caledonia has reserved for her defence? Can you imagine that the Romans are as brave in war, as they are licentious in peace? Acquiring renown from our discords and dissensions, they convert the faults of their enemies to the glory of their

own army,—an army compounded of the most different nations, which, as success alone has kept together, misfortune will certainly dissipate. Unless, indeed, you can suppose that Gauls and Germans, and (I blush to say it) even Britons, who, though they expend their blood to establish a foreign dominion, have been longer its foes than its subjects; can you suppose they will be retained by loyalty and affection? Terror and dread alone are their weak bonds of attachment, which, when once broken, they who cease to fear will begin to hate. Every incitement to victory is on our side. The Romans have no wives to animate them,—no parents to upbraid their flight. Most of them have either no home, or a distant one. Few in number, ignorant of the country, looking around in silent horror at dark woods, stormy seas, and a heaven itself unknown to them, they are delivered by the gods, as it were, imprisoned and bound, into our hands.

Be not terrified with an idle show, nor the glitter of silver and gold, which can neither protect nor wound. In the very ranks of the enemy we shall find our own bands. The Britons will acknowledge their own cause. The Gauls will recollect

their former liberty. The rest of the Germans will desert them, as the Usipii have lately done. Nor is there anything formidable behind them,—ungarrisoned forts, colonies of old men, municipal towns dis-tempered and distracted between unjust masters and ill-obeying subjects.

Here is a general, here an army ; there, tributes, mines, and all the train of punishments inflicted on slaves, which, whether to bear eternally or instantly to revenge, this battle-field must determine. March then to battle, and think of your ancestors, and think of your posterity.

#### REMARKS.

This speech, put into the mouth of the Caledonian general by Tacitus, is evidently the echo of a brave heart, and all the particulars of it might easily be obtained by Agricola from prisoners after the battle. It reveals to us the dreadful ravages which the Romans inflicted on our fatherland. It shadows forth the worst of slavery. It tells how the conquered inhabitants were made slaves, and forced, under the lash, to clear woods, and drain marshes, and make roads, and build forts. But brave

as the Caledonians were, the eloquence and courage of their general could not save them. They could not withstand in battle array Roman discipline and Roman weapons. Ten thousand Caledonians lay dead on the field of battle; and as nothing further is heard of Galgacus, he probably lay dead among these. In this battle the Romans lost only three hundred and sixty men. Nevertheless, the speech of Galgacus is a noble document, and breathes a noble spirit,—a spirit by which the Caledonians seem to have been actuated in all their battles and struggles with the Romans. Bravely did they fight against Agricola and his trained legions in many a skirmish; but disciplined troops, and polished weapons, and veteran experience, soon scatter the brave like chaff before the wind, when these have not been trained to move in a mass. Pitched battles may be fought, and victories won, yet the land may remain unconquered. The storm-cloud may bring desolation and death, yet by and by the sky will clear, and the smiles of prosperity return. The Caledonians, like their own sturdy oaks, had struck their roots deep into the soil; and they might be despoiled, but they could not be destroyed. Like

the tree of hope, they were cut down ; but new boughs will spring from their roots, and cover the earth with their shadow. So it has been in the ' land of the mountain and the flood,' and so it may be again.

#### BRITAIN AN ISLAND.

During two campaigns of Agricola north of the Forth, he got large assistance from his fleet, which kept near the shore, took charge of the sick, and supplied his troops with provisions when necessary ; but Agricola, finding no more formidable enemies, and no more profitable plunder, resolved to retrace his steps to Castlecary, while he sent off his fleet on a voyage of discovery. That fleet sailed northward, passed through the Moray Firth, visited Orkney and Shetland, doubled Cape Wrath, sailed through the western isles, touched at Land's End in Cornwall, then turned away to the east, and gradually found its way again to the Firth of Forth. This voyage, according to Tacitus, made known to the Romans for the first time that Britain was an island. The Caledonians knew that their home was an island ; but it may be inferred from the Roman discovery, and the attention which

it excited, that the fact was unknown to foreigners. Hence everything written about our island home before the Roman discovery is purely mythical, and of no consequence.

#### CASTLECARY FORT REPAIRED.

In due time Agricola, with his victorious troops, found his way across the Forth, and sought a resting-place at Castlecary. To his great surprise and regret, he found that fort in ruins, and his garrison gone. Without delay, he organized his working bands, set all his men to work, and very soon the Great Central Fort was strengthened and repaired. At Castlecary Agricola remained in command, and strove to introduce civilisation and letters among the people, till the tyrant Emperor Domitian, jealous of his military renown, recalled him to Rome in A.D. 85. Agricola was truly a great man, was the most successful of all the Roman generals in Britain; but his greatness excited the envy and jealousy of Domitian, who deprived him of the honour of a triumph at Rome, to which he was justly entitled. Soon after Agricola died, not without grave suspicions that he had been poisoned. His



career in Caledonia was brief but brilliant, and the foot-marks of his progress and his achievements remain to this day.

#### CALEDONIAN CIVILISATION.

When Agricola invaded Caledonia, he had to make roads through deep marshes, cross streams on hastily constructed floats, and hew his way through immense forests; hence he called the people 'Caledonians,' that is, *the people of the woods*. These Caledonians were divided into as many as twenty-one different tribes or nations. They were petty nations, inhabiting different districts, whose boundaries were not well defined, and they were very often at war with each other. It was rare that two or three of these petty nations, of great importance in their own estimation, and very jealous of each other, could be brought to unite against a common enemy. For the most part they fought separately, and hence they were more easily beaten in detail. They were, however, not savages or barbarians, as some imagine, for civilisation had made considerable progress among them. True, they had no literature nor education, but instead of letters they had bards.

Their weapons of war were not rude stone or flint, for the flinty age had passed away. Neither were they bronze, a melted mixture of brass and tin, long in use in Britain and other nations of the Continent, for the bronze age had departed. But they had weapons of war made of iron. They met their Roman invaders with broad-swords, and spears, and arrows, of the same metal as their own; only their swords were blunt at the point, and made to strike, but not to thrust. Besides, they had war-chariots, like the Egyptians of old, and could fight with them,—a mode of warfare never found among barbarous nations. These chariots were armed with scythes and hooks attached to the wheels and axles, for cutting and tearing their enemies, as they were driven rapidly along. They appear to be similar to those described by Homer in his *Iliad* :—

'Lo, the fierce coursers, as the chariot rolls,  
Tread down whole ranks, and crush out heroes' souls,  
Dash'd from their hoofs, while o'er the dead they fly,  
Black bloody drops, the smoking chariot dye;  
The spiky wheels through heaps of carnage tore,  
And thick the groaning axles dropped with gore.'

These war-chariots the Caledonians managed with great dexterity, and in several encounters they broke the ranks of the Roman

legions. When these chariots had thrown the enemy into confusion, the warriors leaped from them and fought boldly on foot. 'In this manner,' says Cæsar, 'they performed the part both of rapid cavalry and of steady infantry.'

#### CALEDONIAN RELIGION.

When the Romans came into Caledonia, they found the Druid religion prevailing among the people. The Druids—that is, *men of the oaks*—were idolaters, and their religion was very cruel and bloody. They worshipped the sun under the name of Bel, from which comes our word *Beltane*. Beltane is our midsummer, and at this delightful season a festival was held in honour of the god, with bonfires and great rejoicing. The Druids had also a god of war, a god of trade, and a god of eloquence and poetry, besides local and household gods. The oak was their sacred tree, and, like the ancients of other lands, they buried their dead, erected their altars, and performed their idolatrous rites under the oak. Their places of worship were circles of great stones, set up on end in the forest, traces of which are still discovered in some places. There is a

tradition, that at Bankier, nearly opposite Castlecary, once stood a druidical temple; and not many years back, stones exactly resembling those used by the Druids were seen about Bankier. In such druidical temples they offered human sacrifices, not with one victim, but at stated festivals, with many victims at once. Sometimes the knife was plunged into the bosom of a victim, and signs and omens drawn from the position in which he fell, from the convulsions of the limbs, and from the manner in which the blood flowed. At great festivals the deluded worshippers formed and reared an immense figure of wicker-work, very strong, largely proportioned, and shaped like a mighty giant. This figure they surrounded with combustible materials and dry branches of trees, then filled it with human victims bound together, and brought from prison caves, when, amid the noise of drums and the shouts of excited worshippers, they set the whole on fire, and burned it to ashes. What a dark picture of depravity and cruelty! It is proper, however, to remark, that these victims sacrificed to the gods were criminals that had been tried and condemned for such crimes as robbery and murder. Truly 'the dark places of the

earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.' How thankful should we be that our lot has been cast in better times, and Bible times; and that we live and breathe, not under the starless sky of unbroken night, but under the radiant splendour of the uncreated and unclouded sun! How highly should we prize true wisdom and knowledge, drawn from the word of God, because these are not only the stability of our times, but the wings on which we fly to heaven! The true winter of mind is past, the cold rains are over and gone. 'The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.'

#### PEACEFUL TIMES.

For seventy years Roman history is silent regarding Caledonia and Roman forts, the recall of Agricola having created a blank. This silence, however, has a meaning. It means that the Romans held their forts securely, followed their building propensities, cultivated their lands, and ruled over their enemies. Thus for a time the land had rest, and was not desolated by the ravages of war. By and by, how-

ever, the warlike Caledonians were on the alert; they broke through the barriers, and the Romans had more than once to reconquer their previous possessions. Watching their opportunities, the people of the woods, like their own mountain eagles, dashed suddenly on their prey, killed many stragglers, picked up arms, seized what plunder they could, and then rushed back to their dark forests. All the time the Romans were in Caledonia, they found to their cost that it was one thing to conquer a country, and quite another thing to keep their conquests in peaceful possession.

#### CHRISTIAN ROMAN SOLDIERS.

Questions have often been asked by antiquarians and students of Roman history in Scotland, Were there no Christian soldiers in the army of Agricola when he invaded Caledonia in A.D. 81? If there were Christian soldiers in the earlier or later period of Roman possession, are there no evidences, no vestiges of the fact? These questions we shall endeavour to answer.

It is a historical fact, that in the earliest age of Christianity some Roman soldiers

embraced the religion of Jesus. The centurion who superintended and watched Christ's crucifixion confessed before all men, 'Truly this was a righteous man,' and in all likelihood became a Christian. Through the ministry of Peter, Cornelius the Roman centurion and his company became converts, and were admitted members of the Christian Church. When Paul was taken a prisoner to Rome, he continued two whole years in his own hired house, teaching the religion of Jesus, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. There he laboured with considerable success, for his bonds in Christ were manifest in all the palace of the emperor, and in all other places. When writing from Rome to the Christians at Philippi, he also says, 'All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household.'

When the religion of Jesus was thus well known at Rome, and especially in the court of the emperor, it seems quite certain that some of those soldiers sent from time to time into Scotland would be Christians. Agricola invades Scotland with a large Roman army, other generals succeed him, and that army is replenished again and again. By and by the Emperor Severus appears in

person, with numerous forces, to take possession of the whole country; and no one can doubt that among these there were many Christian soldiers. But have we any vestiges, or any satisfactory evidence?

In Gordon's 'Itinerarium' he tells us that many curiously carved stones had in his day been found at Castlecary, and had been carried to Cumbernauld Castle, but that he had not been able to obtain a sight of them. Well, the writer has searched, and found one stone worthy of some attention. He found it near the site of what was once Cumbernauld Castle, burned in 1715, and from the grain and general appearance it is manifestly a Roman stone. On this stone, once forming part of a pillar or altar, there is cut out, in bold relief from the rest of the stone, a shield, and on the centre of the shield there is carved *a heart pierced*; above the pierced heart there are two hands, with fingers and nails minutely accurate, and these hands are also pierced; and beneath the heart there are two feet equally accurate, and similarly pierced. Whose are these, and what are these wounds? That heart pierced is the heart of Jesus, so full of love that He would have taken all the world



into His bosom, if they would have come. These hands are the hands of Jesus, that ministered to the wants and relieved the woes of others. And these feet are the feet of Jesus, that often travelled on errands of mercy, to teach the ignorant and help the distressed. This interesting preaching stone the writer will be happy to show to the curious when visiting Cumbernauld.

That this stone came from Castlecary there can be no doubt. That it is of the same grain and quality as many other stones found at Castlecary, there can be no doubt. That it was the workmanship of one acquainted with the sufferings and death of Jesus, or of some Christian Roman soldier, there can be as little doubt. That the stone was in existence in its present state long before the corruptions of Christianity were introduced, is also evident, else we might have had the figure of a cross or the image of the Virgin. Hence the only conclusion to which we can come about this stone is, that some Christian Roman soldier in the days of Agricola or Severus sits down and carefully carves in raised work his shield emblazoned with the pierced heart, the pierced hands, and the pierced feet of his Saviour; and he does all this to

keep himself in remembrance of that Saviour's sufferings and vicarious death. What a noble shield or covering for a soldier in the day of war ! What a noble shield for any man who knows that his sins might call down the wrath of God !

In Old Testament times, when Jews who resided far from Jerusalem came to worship at the great Passover feasts, they got carved, by puncturing on the palm of their hands, the outline of their gorgeous temple. After returning to their adopted country, they often gazed at the punctured palm, and were vividly reminded of Zion's walls, and had their hearts warmed with fresh love for Zion's privileges. Hence, alluding to this practice, and confirmatory thereof, Jehovah says, ' Behold, I have graven thee on the palms of My hands ; thy walls are continually before Me.' In like manner, the Christian Roman soldier, far from imperial Rome, the city of palaces, far from the scenes of Gospel ordinances, and living at Castlebury Fort, surrounded by heathens, looks on his carved stone shield, and beholds the pierced heart, the pierced hands, and the pierced feet ; and looking on Him whom he has thus pierced he mourns, and finds peace in his heart and comfort in his mind.

What the Jew said of Jerusalem in a land of strangers, he says of his Saviour now, 'If I forget Thee, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember Thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.' Oh that every man gazing on the bleeding hands and feet and pierced side of the Saviour with the eye of faith, thus felt and thus spoke! What a happy world if all men looked on Him whom they have pierced!

'Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee;  
Let the water and the blood,  
From Thy riven side that flow'd,  
Be of sin the double cure,  
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.'

#### LOLLIUS URBICUS.

When Antoninus Pius became Emperor of Rome, he appointed Lollius Urbicus governor of Britain. This general soon reached his headquarters at Castle Cary. He found that fort, and others in the neighbourhood, incessantly harassed by plunderers, and very inadequate as places of defence. He organized fighting parties, and sent them forth in different directions. These soon drove back the warlike tribes

of Caledonia, and pursued them to their inaccessible fastnesses beyond the Grampians. Lollius Urbicus fixed on the line of Agricola's forts for a great and impregnable rampart. He set soldiers, and auxiliaries, and slaves, to work in the erection of something almost as great as the wall of China, though it was only a wall of earth. This extensive rampart he called Antoninus' Wall, in honour of the Emperor. This great barrier is now called, and for many generations, transmitted from sire to son, has been called Graham's *Sheugh*, or dyke. There is a tradition universally prevalent in the locality, that a Pictish leader named Graham was the first to break through the barrier, and that he fell there fighting against the Romans. The breach, however, was effected, and the fight was successful, for the warlike Picts drove the Romans out of Scotland, never to return. Some historians try to explain away the traditionary name of Graham's Dyke, but they might as readily question the existence of Wallace and Bruce, or the fact of the battle of Bannockburn.

## ANTONINUS' WALL.

The wall or rampart of Antoninus consisted of earth, laid on a foundation of stone, twenty feet high, and twenty-four feet thick. A great ditch was on the north side of the wall, twenty feet deep, and forty feet wide. Inside the rampart there was a military road, measured off by mile-stones, some of which have been found, affording ready communication from fort to fort, and from the Forth to the Clyde. The wall extended in a direct line, except when it was necessary to make an angle, whence it went straight as before; and along the inside or eastern side of the wall, there was a paved causeway six feet in breadth. The wall began at Blackness Castle, on the Forth, in the parish of Carriden, and ended at Dunglass Castle, on the Clyde, in the parish of Old Kilpatrick. The whole length was thirty-six miles. The two castles of Blackness and Dunglass are supposed to occupy the cites of the forts built to defend the great points of termination. At intervals of about two miles there were in all twenty-one forts and watch-towers, the great central fort or headquarters

being Castlecary. There is a tradition that a hollow ran through the whole length of the wall, serving the purpose of a great acoustic tube ; so that when a trumpet was sounded at one fort, the sound was instantly conveyed from fort to fort to alarm the Roman soldiers, and let them know that the enemy had appeared.

WALL FINISHED. A.D. 140.

This great rampart was finished A.D. 140 ; and though seventeen centuries have passed way, the wall, and ditch, and road can still be easily traced. In several places near Cumbernauld, such as Westwood, Tollpark, and Garnhall, ten thousand persons could still walk inside the great ditch and be hid from view, both from the north and the south. In Scotland we have great works in roads and bridges, in railways and canals, but the wall of Antoninus was greater than all. Running along the ridge of a sloping bank from sea to sea, it seems to have been skilfully planned, and skilfully executed, to defend Roman territory against northern foes ; so much so, that it seems to have originated the idea of the Forth and Clyde

Canal, that great national work, which runs nearly parallel at the foot of the slope. No wonder that traces of the great Roman wall still remain, after the tear and wear of seventeen centuries. In all probability, these traces will remain till the ruins of modern structures be mingled, the old and the new in one mass, or until

‘The cloud-capp’d towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The silent temples, yea, the great globe itself,  
And all which it inhabit, shall dissolve,  
And like an unsubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a wreck behind.’

#### ROMAN WALL NO GREAT BARRIER.

Formidable as the great wall of Antoninus appeared, it was only so when constantly watched and protected by armed men; hence it was only for a very short time a bulwark against the warlike tribes of the north. These tribes had been conquered in pitched battles, and their dwelling-places destroyed; but they could not be reached in their mountain fastnesses and dense forests. They seem to have thoroughly learned this lesson, ‘He that fights and runs away, may live to fight some other day.’ Accordingly they contrived, in imitation of the Romans, to erect

hill-forts on the other side of the valley, and as nearly opposite as possible to the Roman forts. Nearly opposite Castlecary is Bankier, which means *the fort of slaughter*; and here there was a *castellum*, large and round, and consisting of a ditch and rampart. The area had been paved with flat free-stones, and under the pavements were arched vaults, where broken pieces of leaden pipes and curious carved stones have been found. Here the Caledonians fought many a battle with the Romans, and watched their movements for many years. Farther west, about two miles, there was a Roman fort or camp at Westerwood, of a square form. Exactly opposite, on the other side of the valley, is Banton, a word which means *the town of slaughter*. There, in a morass, large quantities of human bones have been found; and there is no other way of accounting for them, but that a great battle had been fought there, and these bones are the remains of the slain. In this way the Caledonians, who were apt scholars, opposed the Romans by fort against fort, and at fit opportunities broke through the great barrier wall, punished and plundered their conquerors, and cut many of them off in detail.



SEVERUS. A.D. 208.

Complaints of the troublesomeness and destructiveness of the Caledonians were sent again and again to Rome, until the Emperor Severus was so enraged, that in A.D. 208 he came in person into Caledonia. He brought with him a large and powerful army, resolved to subdue the whole country, extirpate every enemy, and gain for himself the much-coveted distinction of *Britannicus*. Severus was an old man, but resolute and iron-hearted, and withal so disabled by gout, that he had to be carried from place to place on a litter. Having wintered at Castlecary and rested his forces, he marched from that fort early in the spring of 209, with all his available troops. His litter was carried over rivers and hills, marshes were drained, roads were made through pathless forests, and the troops toiled and starved, and persevered through almost insurmountable difficulties, till they reached the Moray Firth. There the North Sea brought them to a stand. During their progress northward they never met an enemy. The native tribes, alarmed at the sight of the great Roman army,

commanded in person by the Emperor, concealed themselves in their forests and glens, resolved to avoid a pitched battle. The only astonishing thing the Roman army met with in the north, was long days and short nights, compared with the days and nights of other lands from which they had come.

#### THE ROMAN WALL ABANDONED.

In returning from this northern expedition, the Emperor Severus lost the greater part of his army. The brave Caledonians, unsubdued and patriotic, emerged from their forests and caves, and watched their opportunity to inflict injury. They hung on the rear and flanks of the Roman army, like mountain eagles watching for their prey, swept down in detached parties, cut off the sick and stragglers, then escaped with their booty, and hid themselves in their woods. It was computed and acknowledged by Roman historians, that above fifty thousand soldiers perished in this mad expedition, some by the sword, some by hunger, some by disease, and multitudes by fatigue. When the Emperor returned to Castlecary, he came to fortifications

again in ruins, and found the barrier wall broken down in many places. Having surveyed the depredations of active foes, he was convinced that ditches and mud walls were no protection against brave enemies, without a constant guard of soldiers; hence, instead of repairing ruined forts and broken walls, he resolved to abandon them altogether, and fix the boundary wall a hundred miles farther south. Thus the wall of Antoninus, from which so much had been expected, was abandoned and left to go to ruin, and at the same time the best part of Caledonia was restored to its native tribes. The Emperor Severus, with his surviving and shattered legions, marched southward, and there constructed a new boundary wall, not of earth, but of stone, between the Solway Firth and the River Tyne. Severus died at York, A.D. 211. When he found his end approaching, he cried out, 'I have been everything, and everything is nothing.' He then ordered the urn to be brought, in which his ashes were to be enclosed, after the burning of his body, when he said, 'Little urn, thou shalt contain one for whom the world was too little.'

## FINGAL.

It is remarkable that Roman history does not satisfactorily account for Severus abandoning Castlecary, and the Roman wall, and all the land between it and the Solway Firth. For one hundred and twenty years the Romans ruled at Castlecary, and had great works, and without assigning any reason hastily left the whole. Well may every reader of history ask, Why so? How can we account for it? By the publication of Ossian's Poems, the great exploits of Fingal, with his heroes and bards, have been revived. Fingal is said to have commanded the Celtic septs or Caledonians, when Severus and his son Caracalla ravaged our fatherland. We venture the following extract from Ossian on the subject:—'Raise, ye bards, the song; raise the wars of the streamy Carun! Caracal has fled from our arms along the field of his pride. He sets far distant like a meteor, that encloses a spirit of night, when the winds drive it over the heath, and the dark woods are gleaming around.' 'Roll, streamy Carun, roll in joy; the sons of battle are fled! the steed is not seen on

our fields ; the wings of their pride spread on other lands. The sun will now rise in peace, and the shadows descend in joy. The voice of the chase will be heard ; the shields hang in the hall.' Whether history or fable, Ossian's account of Fingal's great victory on the banks of the river Carron, only a short distance from Castlecary, is truly remarkable. Roman history informs us that Severus and Caracalla his son were glad to abandon Caledonia, but Ossian alone gives us the only satisfactory reason. Fingal obtains a victory over the Romans on the banks of the Carron ; Severus the king of the world, and Caracalla the son of the king of the world, are conquered, and hastily remove into England, for this very good reason, that Caledonia was too hot to hold them, and had proved a most unprofitable speculation.

#### SCOTS AND PICTS.

In A.D. 360, during the reign of the Emperor Julian the Apostate, the warriors of our native land appear in history and tradition under the designation of Scots and Picts. The word 'Scot' means *a wanderer*, and the word 'Pict'

means *a fighting man*. These Scots and Picts, sprung from the followers of Fingal, were daring soldiers, bloodthirsty murderers, dreadful plunderers, and seem to have been more than a match for the effeminate Romans, whose empire was gradually falling to pieces. Near the end of the fourth century, the Romans once more fought their way to Castlecary and Antoninus' wall; but the fierce Picts, aided by the Scots, came over from Camelon, once a town of the Pictish kingdom, and some think the capital of that kingdom, furiously attacked the Romans, fought like tigers, and in a short time drove them entirely out of Scotland. Roman history informs us that the Picts, in one of their raids, killed a Roman general, although the general's name and the place of his death are not mentioned. Up from Castlecary, and forming part of the lands of Castlecary, is a farm called Bandominie, only a mile from the Roman fort. This word 'Bandominie' undoubtedly means, the slaughter of the lord or general, and like Banton and Bankier, already explained, may give us a key for discovering even at the present day where the Roman general fell by the slaughter

of the Picts. These fierce and warlike Scots and Picts not only slew many of the Romans in Scotland, but, bent on plunder, and irresistible in their attacks, they invaded England. So dreadful were their ravages in England against both the Romans and the English, that application had to be made to Rome for more troops to resist and repel them. Fierce and daring, burning with revenge, and greedy of plunder, these Scots and Picts forced their way to London, plundered that city, and returned to Scotland loaded with booty. In A.D. 422, Rome, instead of being able to send more soldiers into Britain, had to recall the last legion to defend the imperial city against powerful barbarians. As the sun of imperial Rome was now setting, and as Ichabod was written on her walls, instructions came to the English that no more help could be obtained, and that they must organize and defend themselves as they best could against their northern invaders.

#### CITIES AND TOWNS.

Thus, after having been in Scotland three hundred and fifty years, the Roman

soldiers, with their helmets and breast-plates of shining brass, their long shields and their heavy swords and stout spears, were seen no more in Caledonia. The question has often been asked, Had the Romans no towns during their long residence in Scotland? Could learned and civilised men, with so many captives and slaves under their authority, dwell so long in our country, and never build substantial dwellings? Undoubtedly the Romans had many towns in Caledonia. History distinctly informs us that they once had as many as thirty-one towns in different parts of the country. Galgacus, the Caledonian general, is represented as saying in his famous speech, already quoted, and on the authority of Tacitus: 'The Romans had behind them ungarrisoned forts, colonies of old men, *municipal towns*, distempered and distracted between unjust masters and ill-obeying subjects.' If, then, these towns once were, where are they now, and where are the traces of their remains? Not far from Castlecary fort there is a farm called Walton, the old house on which, now removed, stood right above the precipitous bank of the Bonny, or Redburn. In ancient times the site of castles and towns



was always chosen with a high bank in front. The word 'Walton' means a *fortified town*, and there can be no doubt that this was once a dwelling-place of the Romans. Persons are still living who have seen very old gravestones about this place; besides, there are other indications of great antiquity. After thousands of years we are only yet discovering the ruins of Nineveh, and Pompeii, and Herculaneum; and if search were made,—and it ought to be made,—we have no doubt whatever but many interesting ruins would be discovered, and many valuable relics turned up, at Castlecary and its neighbourhood.

#### FRUITS OF THE ROMAN INVASION.

What fruits, it may be asked, have we in Scotland reaped from the Roman invasion? What good have the Romans done by their long residence in Caledonia? What footprints have been left on the sands of time? Let us look at the highlands of Scotland, and let us look at Wales, where the Romans never had a dwelling-place, and by contrast we shall see some of the fruits. When the Ro-

mans came into Caledonia, they brought letters, and learning, and literature along with them. They were the first people who gave our country and its inhabitants a name and a place in books and history. They erected a monument for us more enduring than brass. From the Romans we have obtained all the letters of our alphabet, and many of our words. They laid at least the foundation of our language, a language whose power and influence extend over the whole world. And had it not been for the Romans, the Celtic tongue might still have been the only language in Britain. Where, then, would have been our books and our literature, now found in every home, and the food of every mind? From the Romans also we learned the use of money, the art of commerce, the importance of making roads and bridges, the cultivation of the soil, the drainage of marshes, the art of war by disciplined troops, the art of building by masonry, the formation of towns, and many useful domestic arts. True, the English language is a great mixture of the Celtic, the Latin, the Saxon, the Norman, and other languages; but the classic (Latin) introduced and taught by the Romans is a

golden ingredient, and a splendid element, making our language superior to any language in modern Europe. Besides, by the residence of the Romans in Scotland, our beloved country was in some measure prepared for the introduction of Christianity, that only true religion, which is the grand secret of personal and national greatness.

#### CASTLECARY OLD CASTLE.

Within sight of the Roman fort, and less than half a mile from it, and within sight of the railway station, stands what is commonly called Castlecary Castle. It is a very old building, finely situated on an abrupt and lofty bank, strongly built, with very thick walls, and having been often repaired, is still habitable. This old castle, and the lands connected with it, belong to the Right Honourable the Earl of Zetland. It has not been ascertained when the castle was built, nor by whom it was built; but it is undoubtedly very old, although it has not been very long in possession of the present noble family of Dundas. The castle evidently belongs to the Roman period, not the early, but the later period

of Roman history. It consists of a square tower of considerable height, say forty feet, turreted round the top, and is a very plain but evidently a strong building. Underneath, where the cellar of a modern house would be, there is a dark dungeon, where there is ocular demonstration that prisoners were once kept; and there are secret passages, and subterraneous arches, about which there are many conjectures. One conjecture is, that the subterraneous passages in early times led to the old Roman fort on the one hand, and to the old Roman town, now called Walton, on the other. Near the old castle there are strong and extensive foundations, indicating that at one time the castle consisted of four towers instead of one. These foundations have been seen and examined within a few years. The tradition in the locality is, that the stones with which this old castle was built were dug out of the old Roman fort, not long after the fort and wall were abandoned by the Emperor Severus. This tradition seems quite probable, and in accordance with present appearances. From the position of the castle, situated on a lofty and precipitous bank above the Redburn, it seems to have

been intended for a strong place. With the dense forest behind, and the lofty and almost perpendicular banks in front, and the difficulty of access all around, this castle in the olden time must have been considered impregnable. This old castle is chiefly worthy of consideration, because it was built by Roman stones, and probably by the Romans during the later period of their residence in Scotland, and because of its proximity to the old military fort at Castlecary.

#### SCENERY AROUND.

By a very narrow stair the visitor can ascend to the roof of the old castle; and as it is turreted round, there is perfect safety. The view from the turreted roof is very grand, especially towards the north, while the rich scenery around is so beautiful, that it may well kindle poetic fire. There stands the old castle, with its two old yew-trees in front, a fair specimen of Roman and territorial greatness in dark times. The lofty trees, the deep wooded glens, the grassy knolls, the purling brook with its steep banks, fit enough for a lover's leap; the sweet cascade embosomed in

overhanging woods, the lowing of cattle, the hoarse screaming of crows, the cooing of wood-pigeons, the startling voice of the cuckoo, and the sweet singing of birds,—all make the visitor feel that for the time he is on enchanted ground, or in nature's paradise, yet a paradise of deep solitude. Two lovers were once walking through this paradise, when the conversation, like sand in the glass, ran down. At the moment, two birds began to sing on a lovely tree. Do you hear that bird singing? asked he at the fair maiden. She replied in the affirmative. Do you know his sweet song? I do not, was her reply. Well, her lover gave this interpretation: 'I love you,' 'I love you.' The fair one observed, His song is stopped; and his mate beside him has begun, and the mate is sweetly singing, 'Show it,' 'Show it.' Such is the fable, and the lessons are not difficult. Castle-cary glen, and the sweet spots around the old castle, were truly beautiful and grand, until the Caledonian Railway, with its banking and cutting, passed through it, and greatly marred its beauty. We venture, nevertheless, the following ode as a description of it :—

## CASTLECARY GLEN.

I love to see the fields so green,  
The golden waving grain ;  
I love to wander through the woods,  
Just after summer rain.  
But the wilder scenes of nature,  
Far from the haunts of men,  
Have charms for me, I always found  
In Castlecary glen.

How beautiful its sloping banks,  
With pretty wild-flowers clad ;  
How sweet the voice of singing birds,  
Whose music made me glad !  
The blackbird and the thrush were there,  
With the sweet little wren,  
Making air and trees all vocal  
In Castlecary glen.

Here, too, I heard the roaring linn  
Just after thunder showers,  
Whose waters sweetly kiss'd the banks,  
Beneath the castle towers.  
But it would take a clever man,  
With pencil or with pen,  
To sketch or write the beauties all  
Of Castlecary glen.

Sweet mem'ry dwells on richer feast,  
Than banks, or linn, or stream ;  
It brings together hearts entwined  
In love's young happy dream.  
These hearts were one in pleasant walks,  
Up braes and down again ;  
Hence sure we never can forget  
Sweet Castlecary glen.

Yet nature's beauties all must fade,  
Though charming to the sight ;

For souls must spread a wider wing,  
And take a loftier flight :  
The world above has charms for us,  
Far, far beyond our ken ;  
So we must take a sweet farewell  
Of Castlecary glen.

#### TRADITIONS IN GENERAL.

When occasionally luxuriating in the neighbourhood of Castlecary, and walking for healthful recreation and enjoyment, as well as for the discharge of important duties, the writer often met with a genial old man, who had lived all his days—and his fathers lived before him—in sight of the old castle. The writer was certain that, if any man living had reliable traditions about Castlecary, sacredly transmitted from sire to son, it would be this old man. So he turned the conversation to this subject, and put a few questions.

Was that old castle built by the Romans ?  
Yes, I believe it was. It evidently belongs to the Roman period, for the Scots and Picts, who ruled after the Romans, were too fond of war and plunder to build castles. They were more likely to pull down and destroy than build. One thing is certain, the Romans quarried and dressed the stones, first to build Castlecary fort ;



and then after that had gone to ruin, or partly so, they conveyed the stones on sleighs and the backs of their captives and slaves, and built the castle with them. Hence Castlecary Castle is undoubtedly the oldest habitable building in Scotland. True, it was burned once, and has been repaired often; yet its old turrets look down upon us after the lapse of fifteen centuries.

Have you heard of any war in connection with this old castle? Well, the dungeon, and places in its walls for fastening prisoners, imply war; but there is no tradition of any siege, and there was no cannon in the early days of this castle. It was burned by a party of Highlanders during the Rebellion in 1715, and this was easily accomplished without any fighting. I have, however, heard of domestic war in the castle arising from romantic love. The name of Lizzie Baillie is still fresh in this neighbourhood; and as her story of ardent love is interesting, I will relate it.

#### LIZZIE BAILLIE.

At one time a beautiful young maiden named Lizzie Baillie lived in the castle. Her childhood sweetened the married life

of her parents; and her girlhood, like the opening flower, brightened their hopes. She was the pride of her haughty father, and the cheerer of her sad and careful mother, and the sunbeam of the whole household. When she was almost grown, it became necessary to send her to Edinburgh, to finish her education, see good society, prepare for domestic duties, and fit her for the battle of life. While in Edinburgh she became acquainted with a young Highland chieftain named Graham. Miss Baillie and young Graham met frequently. Their intercourse was first pleasant and then delightful. He began to think that her face was the sweetest, and her eye the brightest, he had ever seen. She began to think that his manly form, his kind words and looks, the warm grasp of his hand, and the steady gaze of his eyes, made her feel as she had never felt before. In short, their love, though unuttered, was understood, and felt to be mutual. Each not only appreciated but admired the other, and the gentle passion was strong, romantic, and unquenchable.

#### THE STOLEN VISIT.

Some time after the return of Miss Baillie from Edinburgh, the Highland

chieftain made a stolen visit to Castlemary Castle, and through a servant succeeded in obtaining an interview with his fair lover. It was wrong and undutiful for her to have clandestine love. She should have opened her mind to her mother at once, and used means to obtain the approbation of her parents. Instead of this, she joined her lover in his stolen visit. The fond and loving pair were soon in the deep wooded glen, where no human eye could see them. Their fond eyes gazed intently, their warm hands held each other, and their loving hearts beat in unison. At length they came to the linn, the sweet cascade, whose falling waters were in harmony with the soft sound of their footsteps, and near the top, embowered in overhanging woods, they found an enchanting and romantic seat. The love-inspiring moon smiled upon them with her broad, bright, happy face; the twinkling stars looked down upon them with clear, watching, loving eyes; the soft breath of evening fanned the gentle flame that burned in their young and hopeful hearts; the waters of the Redburn kissed the shaded banks, re-echoing their tokens of happy love; and the soft whispers of the waterfall breathed

sweetness into their cup of enjoyment. Mutual love was told, mutual hopes and fears expressed, mutual glances of warm affection exchanged, mutual pledges given, mutual vows uttered; and heaven and earth, and shady trees and murmuring brook, and sweet cascade and rocks and stones, were invoked as witnesses of the solemn transaction. The fair maiden told her fond lover that she anticipated opposition from her parents, and that she dreaded the encounter of an angry father. Her love for her parents created a tumult of hope and fear in her bosom; yet she trusted that her affectionate and gentle attentions, and a little time, would soften or overcome their opposition. With an earnest promise to let him know as soon as possible her success or the reverse, renewed pledges of undying love were given, and an affectionate farewell taken; and lest she should be missed or discovered, she waved her ardent lover a reluctant adieu, and returned quietly to the old castle.

#### OPPOSITION.

She had been missed, and in consequence Lizzie Baillie's parents suspected, and af-

terwards discovered, the love-match. The father was grieved and angry, and determined that the daughter of Baillie of Castlecary should be humbled and restrained. He had designed his daughter for another, and denounced in strong invectives Highland pride and Highland poverty. At length he resolved to put an end to this love-match, whatever might be the consequences. He was greatly indignant at the stolen visit. He looked upon the Highland chieftain as a most unsuitable match for his fair daughter, and vowed vengeance and threatened bodily harm. Besides, Lizzie Baillie, though vexed with the violence of her father, would give him no satisfaction, and come under no obligation to discard her lover. Hence her father shut her up a close prisoner in one of the highest rooms of the castle. If the daughter was rash and wrong in her love-match, the father was farther wrong in attempting to overcome it by passion and restraint. If the inexperienced maiden had erred in concealing her lover, the father erred still more by his threats and violence. Poor Lizzie Baillie! is thy love to be overcome by physical force? Are thy hopes to be blasted by opposition and solitary confinement?

Are thy castles of future bliss to be thrown down in a moment? And are thy solemn vows to be broken by human power?

LOVE STRONGER THAN THE CASTLE.

Nay, verily! Prison walls cannot confine true love, nor angry clouds obscure it, nor thunder alarm it, nor harsh treatment quench it. As the breeze fans the flame, as the tempest makes the roots of the oak strike deeper into the soil, and as pressure makes the young corn grow stronger, so opposition, and anger, and persecution, feed and strengthen and confirm the gentle passion of young love. Through one of the servants in her confidence, the fair prisoner found means of communicating with her ardent lover. Hope sustained her, and bore her up on her bright wings, and whispered that, like the mountain eagle, she would soon be free.

DONALD GRAHAM.

After a few days the Highland chieftain found his way to the castle, accompanied by four stalwart men, to aid him in either attack or defence. Brave hearts and

handy claymores were their only weapons. During the dead of night they approached the old keep, very cautiously at first, lest its dark dungeon should become their home. The murmur of the brook, and the breeze among the trees, were the only sounds heard. Soon other signs and other sounds, such as true lovers only know, brought the fair prisoner to the lofty window behind the castle. She opened the window, she looked out, she saw the dark shadows of her true love and his companions, she heard whispers that re-echoed through her heart, but she was appalled at the dreadful descent. Her heart was like to die within her at the thought of descending thirty feet. But her prison-door was locked, and exit was impossible, except through the window, or the risk of discovery. Shall thirty feet baffle her lover's hopes and her own? Shall the Hellespont or the Tiber obstruct the course of true love? In this dilemma the gallant chieftain, fertile in resources, and ready for action, took off his Highland plaid, and ordered the four strong men to hold it with all their might by the four corners. He whispered kind and encouraging words: 'Come into my plaid, my brave one, and

you will be safe. For I have come for thee, and you must come with me to my own Highland home.' She responded: 'I wish to come, and I will try, though I should die.' In fear, and yet in faith, brave Lizzie Baillie jumped into the plaid unhurt, and next moment she was in the arms of her lover. Heart is now joined to heart, and both are crowned with true love. Young Donald Graham and his fair bride now haste, haste from the castle prison, and haste to the Highlands so grand. Fleet horses were waiting for them at some distance, and ere morning dawned they were beyond the reach of pursuit, and arrived safely and lived happily in their own Highland home. In the morning there was great consternation in the castle, when it was discovered that the sweet bird had flown. Search was made all around, but in vain; and by and by Baillie of Castlecary discovered, when too late, that having sown folly, he must reap misery.

Such is the tradition of Lizzie Baillie existing in the locality. The story is poetic as well as romantic. In Buchan's Ballads of the North there is one on Lizzie Baillie, and there are certain statements prefixed concerning the real parties referred to, but



these statements cannot apply to Baillie of Castlecary. They must refer to other parties and other incidents, and another locality. On the groundwork of said ballad there is a song, the author unknown, with which the people in the locality are familiar. As this song is very short, we give it here:—

SONG—LIZZIE BAILLIE.

‘My bonnie Lizzie Baillie,  
I’ll row you in my plaidie;  
And ye maun gang awa wi’ me,  
And be a Highland ladie.’

‘I’m sure they wadna ca’ me wise,  
Gin I would gang wi’ you, sir;  
For I can neither card nor spin,  
Nor yet milk ewe or cow, sir.’

‘My bonnie Lizzie Baillie,  
Let nane o’ thae things daunt ye;  
Ye’ll hae nae need to card or spin,  
Your mither weel can want ye.’

Now she’s cast aff her bonny shoon,  
Made o’ the gilded leather,  
And she’s put on her hielan’ brogues,  
To skip amang the heather.

Now wae be to the lowland lads,  
That dwell near Castlecary,  
To let awa sic a bonny lass,  
A hielanman to marry.

## MORE POETRY.

Thus Castlecary, so long and so justly famous in the history of our country, is not altogether unknown to song. There is another fair maiden, who once lived in the castle, and who has often been very erroneously confounded with Lizzie Baillie. She is known as Mary of Castlecary, and is described as having, in rather a singular way, tested the courage, and temper, and faithfulness of her lover. Some persons cannot be thoroughly known till you cross their path, and take up an antagonistic position. We do not approve of the plan adopted by Mary of Castlecary, although it turned out successful as a test. At a fit opportunity she disguised herself in male apparel, and sallied forth with blue bonnet and belted plaid. Expecting her lover, she placed herself in his way, and by feigned words succeeded in arousing the jealous giant within him. At the critical moment, when he was fired with indignation, and ready to take summary vengeance, she threw off her disguise, satisfied that his love was brave and true. It was a happy surprise to him, and helped to strengthen

the affection of both. Hector Macneil, Esq., made a sweet song on the subject; and though it is well known, we give it, in order to make our sketch as complete as possible.

### MARY OF CASTLECARY.

‘Saw ye my wee thing?

Saw ye my ain thing?

Saw ye my true love down on yon lea?

Cross’d she the meadow yestreen at the gloaming?

Sought she the burnie, where flowers the haw tree?

Her hair it is lint-white,

Hear skin it is milk-white,

Dark is the blue o’ her saft rolling e’e,

Red, red her ripe lips, and sweeter than roses,

Where could my wee thing wander frae me?’

‘I saw your ain Mary,

She’s frae Castlecary,

I saw your ain true love down on yon lea;

Proud as her heart is, and modest her nature,

Sweet were the kisses that she gaed to me.’

Sair gloom’d his dark brow,

Blood-red his cheek grew

Wild flash’d the fire frae his red rolling e’e,

‘Ye’ll rue sair this morning your boasts and your  
scorning,

Defend ye, fause traitor, for loudly ye lee.’

‘Awa’ wi’ beguiling,’

Cried the youth, smiling.

Aff went the bonnet—the lint-white locks flee—

The belted plaid fa’ing, her white bosom shawing,

Fair stood the lov’d maid wi’ the dark rolling e’e.

‘Is it my wee thing?  
Is it mine ain thing?  
Is it my true love here that I see?  
O, Jamie, forgie me—your heart’s constant to me;  
I’ll never mair wander, dear laddie, frae thee.’

# CONCLUSION.

The task which the writer assigned to himself is done. He has travelled over a path both old and new, and somewhat difficult; and he has gathered his information from a great variety of sources. His labour has been great, yet it has been pleasant and instructive. He does not expect every one to agree with him in his views, for there are matters referred to which admit of great diversity of opinion. He has taken the liberty of thinking for himself, and he is quite willing that others should do the same. He will be glad if others can add new discoveries and further information on a subject of such deep interest as Roman history and Roman remains. He will gladly salute every traveller he may meet with on similar fields, and heartily join him in admiring the hoary antiquity of the past, so far as it may warm the patriotism and elevate the minds of the brave and noble sons and daughters of modern Caledonia.















